631 As it was constituted under the Ch'ing Dynasty (1644 to 1912) and again in the 1930's by the National Government, ten adjacent families were grouped as a p'ai, ten p'ai as a chia, and ten chia, or one thousand households, as a pao. The head of each unit was responsible for the conduct and defense of those households under him, and the head of the pao had to answer to the government for the conduct and protection of the thousand households.

D. Economic Role

596 421 As the definition of the term "family" infers, it was the basic economic unit of the society. Real property such as land, houses, and workshops were owned by the family rather than by individuals. When disharmony caused the breakup of a joint family, its real property was divided among the constituent conjugal families, each as a new family claiming title to the portion of property which fell to its share.

596 The peasant, artisan, and small-merchant families were units of both production and consumption. Male family members worked together in the fields, workshop, or store to produce the goods on which the family mainly relied for a living. Sons nearly always followed their father's occupation and seldom left home. Women worked [462] in the home, taking care of the children and turning out the family's clothes and shoes. Where sericulture was practiced, women managed the entire industry from the cultivation of mulberry trees to the weaving of cloth. Food and clothing